REMARKS

Claims 1-40 are pending in the application. Applicants amend claims 1 and 36 for further clarification. No new matter has been added.

The Examiner objected to claims 1, 5-6, and 11 for apparent informalities. Applicant cancels claims 5-6, and amends claims 1 and 11 to clarify the recitation of the claimed invention, which includes removing the informalities objected to by the Examiner. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw the objection.

Claims 1-40 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0014213 to Yokota in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0060214 to Hendrey et al. Applicants amend claims 1 and 36 in a good faith effort to further clarify the invention as distinguished from the cited references, and respectfully traverse the rejection.

Yokota describes a technique for analyzing population distribution that produces information about areas where the density of population is high and where a mobile promotion and advertising media, such as a promotion car or the like, can advertise efficiently. With reference to the Abstract and Fig. 1 of Yokota, a population distribution analyzing apparatus (500) is provided with: a target setting unit (540) that sets an area (target area), which includes a population distribution of a plurality of users respectively carrying a portable terminal therewith, to be analyzed; a positional information acquiring unit (550) that acquires respective positional information of each portable terminal; and an analyzing unit (570) that analyzes the population distribution of the users in the target area on the basis of the acquired positional information.

Hendrey et al. describe a system for furnishing location-based services (LBS) to users. As shown in Fig. 1 thereof, when a user makes a request for a prescribed location-based service (LBS) of an application system 110 using a user computer system 114 or a mobile

unit 112, a rule generator of the application system 110 creates a rule and sends it to a rules system 104. An example of the LBS is notifying the user of the fact that the user is within 1 km of his favorite restaurant.

The rules system 104 judges whether or not the rule is satisfied based upon the user position information obtained from a positioning system 102, state/attribute information obtained from a state/attribute database 106, and geographic information obtained from a GIS database 108. And when the rule is satisfied, the rules system 104 sends a response to the application system 110, and the application system 110 delivers the requested location-based services (LBS) to the user via the mobile unit 112.

Thus, unlike the claimed invention, neither Yokota nor Hendrey et al. discloses an information provider terminal that is connected to a server system and that includes means for designating, to the server system, an information distribution region and attributes of service users. The claimed invention is an information distribution service providing system, which has the server system and the information provider terminal connected to the server system, for distributing information, which has been requested by the information provider, via a network from the server system to mobile information terminals of users who have said attribute and present in said information distribution region.

In other words, even assuming, arguendo, that it would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time the claimed invention was made to combine Yokota and Hendrey et al., such a combination would still have failed to disclose or suggest,

> "[a]n information distribution service providing system, which has a server system and an information provider terminal connected to the server system, for distributing information, which has been requested by an information provider, via a network from the server system to mobile information terminals of service users for which utilization of an information providing service has been registered, wherein said information provider terminal includes means for

designating, to the server system, an information distribution region and attributes of service users; and

said server system includes:

means for monitoring, based upon position information from service users for which utilization of an information providing service has been registered, the state of distribution of service users who have said attributes and are present in the information distribution region designated by the information provider; and

means for distributing prescribed information that has been requested by the information provider to mobile information terminals of service users having said attributes based upon the state of distribution of service users," as recited in claim 1. (Emphasis added)

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 1 is patentable over Yokota and Hendrey et al., separately and in combination, for at least the foregoing reasons. Claims 2 and 36-37 incorporate features that correspond to those of claim 1 cited above, and are, therefore, together with claims 3-35 and 38-40 dependent therefrom, respectively, patentable over the cited references for at least the same reasons.

In view of the remarks set forth above, this application is in condition for allowance which action is respectfully requested. However, if for any reason the Examiner should consider this application not to be in condition for allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned attorney at the number listed below prior to issuing a further Action.

Any fee due with this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-1290.

Respectfully submitted,

/Dexter T. Chang/

Dexter T. Chang
Reg. No. 44,071

CUSTOMER NUMBER 026304
Telephone: (212) 940-6384
Fax: (212) 940-8986 or 8987
Docket No.: FUSA 20.946 (100807-00095)
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